

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

**SAU 79**

**Kenn Rishell, Superintendent**

**Mary Paradise, Coordinator of Special Education**

## **Final Report**

**January 15, 2001**

**Visit Conducted on:**

**November 7, 2000**

**Team Members:**

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Elaine Dodge, Inclusion Educator, Elementary

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Students with Disabilities  
  
(Commendations, Citations and Suggestions for each school)

Note: *It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The district is not mandated to implement them.*

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

## **SAU 79**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

A New Hampshire Department of Education Special Education Program Approval visit was conducted at SAU 79 comprised of the following schools: Gilmanton Elementary school, and Gilford High School. (Gilmanton students attend Gilford High School for grades 9-12.) The visiting team met on November 7, 2000 in order to review the status of special education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the teaching certifications of special education staff, analysis of SPEDIS data and random inspection of student records. Interviews were held with the Special Education Director, building principal, regular and special education teachers, and related service personnel as time and availability permitted. In addition, the team conducted parent interviews via telephone. Throughout the visit, the team had full cooperation from the school personnel and this helpfulness was greatly appreciated.

The report that you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of the visiting team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the NH State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no citations of noncompliance to the Standards found in that particular area.

### **II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE: *Conducted on January 10 - 11, 1995***

In 1995, the Gilmanton School District was part of SAU 30, Laconia. It has been a separate school district for two years. Even though they are a separate district, Gilmanton "purchases" superintendent, special education administration and business services from the Laconia SAU. In interviewing people, there appears to be some dissatisfaction with the supervision and support from the central office. The special education coordinator at Gilmanton does not seem to receive much support or supervision from the Laconia special education administrator. However, she does receive a tremendous amount of support from her building principal and from the Gilford special education administrator. The School Board and the community are very supportive of the school and have shown their support in a variety of ways, as mentioned below. At the last on-site there were a number of paperwork citations which are still of concern. The visiting team was very impressed with the new Special Education Plan and all of the new forms that have been revised to meet new standards. Team members noted that these new forms will correct most of the current citations.

### **III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

It is apparent that this new school district is supportive of all of its children. A full day kindergarten, offering foreign language to all children from kindergarten to eighth grade, BEST schools initiative, creative "looping", and developing a Community Engagement Team (CET) are evidence of the support from the community, the school board, the administration and the staff of the school. The School Board increased the special education coordinator from part to full time this year, allowing her more time to oversee special education programs in the school district. Recruiting and hiring special education staff has been difficult. Almost all of the special education staff is new this year. One teacher is not certified in special education, but is working under an Alternative certification program to become certified. There are 10 paraprofessionals in the elementary school, working with both general and special education students. Gilmanton should be commended for having only two out-of-district students. However, both of these files are out of compliance. One of the two students is 5 months overdue for a

three-year re-evaluation, and the other student is missing important components of the evaluation and student's rights section of the requirements. One preschool child is receiving services even though there is no signed IEP in place.

Throughout the on-site visit, the visiting team was impressed with the efforts of all staff to provide quality programming to all students in the least restrictive environment. The inclusive philosophy, the positive staff and school culture was evident as team members observed children and talked to staff. Team members who visited Gilford High School to review Gilmanton students' files commented on the high level of cooperation among staff and the positive environment for students.

In summary, it was a pleasure for the team to view the excellent programs for special education students in the Gilmanton School District. The concerns were minor and the progress toward full integration is evident.

#### **IV. COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: SAU-WIDE**

##### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- The community and the school board are extremely supportive of special education programs.
- The collaboration of the principal and the coordinator of special education are excellent. They are the link between the school and the School Board/Community.

##### **CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

There are no SAU wide citations. Those that are listed in the individual school reports are minimal.

##### **SUGGESTIONS:**

There are no SAU-wide suggestions. See individual reports for building suggestions.

## Gilmanton Elementary School

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Modified Regular 2) Resource Room

**# OF FILES REVIEWED:** 4 Files

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- Staff is positive and foster an inclusive school environment.
- There is a high degree of community support.
- Programs provide a positive school culture for student with multiple disabilities.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

<u>Ed. 1107.03</u>	2 files: lacked evidence that teacher certified in area of suspected disability on evaluation team.
<u>Ed. 1107.05(k)</u>	1 file: evaluation not completed within 45 days, no extension in file.
<u>Ed. 1107.06</u>	1 file: No evaluation summary in file.
<u>Ed. 1107.08(d)</u>	1 file: No vision/hearing evaluation for LD determination.
<u>Ed. 1125</u> <u>Ed. 1107</u>	1 file: evaluation SPEDIS form missing from file. No clear statement as to when student was evaluated or when re-evaluation is due.
<u>Ed. 1109.01</u>	1 file: no signed IEP in file; unsigned draft in file.
<u>Ed. 1109.01(k)</u>	3 files: lacked statement of parties assuming financial responsibility.
<u>Ed. 1109.01</u> <u>CFR300347(a)(1)(i)</u>	3 files: lacked statement of how the student's disability affects their involvement and progress within the general curriculum.
<u>CFR 300.347(a)(4)</u>	1 file: no statement as to the extent to which the student will participate with non-disabled peers.
<u>Ed. 1109.04</u>	1 file: lacked evidence that procedural safeguards were sent with notice of IEP meeting.
<u>Ed. 1109.11</u>	1 file: lacked evidence of regular and systematic monitoring of IEP progress.
<u>Ed. 1111.01</u>	1 file: ESY decision not made by 4/30 or 60 days prior to start of program. 1 file: lacked evidence that ESY was considered.
<u>Ed. 1115.06</u>	3 files: lacked evidence that least restrictive environment was discussed/considered.
<u>Ed. 1125.04</u>	1 file: written consent for placement not in file.
<u>CFR300.346(a)(1)(iii)</u>	1 file: lacked evidence that NHEIAP results considered in developing IEP.
<u>CFR300.347(a)(5)</u>	1 file: IEP lacked statement regarding state assessment.
<u>CFR300.347(a)(7)(i)</u>	1 file: lacked statement of how progress will be measured.



**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Consider reorganizing files to divide information in separate areas (e.g. ASP/IEP, evals, notes, minutes, etc.)
- Provide staff training in writing IEPs with goals and objectives aligned with the NH State Curriculum Frameworks.
- Implement new forms.
- Provide staff with professional development opportunities on topics such as curriculum modifications, disability awareness, inclusion of students with disabilities, differentiating instruction, etc.
- Contract out for staff with certification in area of disability to attend staffings.



## Gilford High School

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** 1) Regular Education Program

**# OF FILES REVIEWED:** 3 Files

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- Staff are highly committed and work well together.
- Staff are doing a wonderful job meeting needs of students with disabilities in the mainstream.
- There are positive attitudes and high energy among all teachers, students and staff.
- Regular education teachers work well incorporating special needs students in classroom.
- The learning lab is located in the mainstream and not recognized as a “special ed” place.
- The school has made tremendous progress in updating their forms and bringing them into compliance.

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

Ed. 1107.01 (c ) 2 files: technically sound, non-discriminatory instruments were not used.

Ed. 1107.07(c )(1) 1 file: lacked evidence of teacher certified in area of disability on team.

CFR 300.347 (c ) 2 files: lacked documentation of notice of transfer of rights 1 year before age 18.

CFR 300.346(a)(1)iii 3 files: lacked evidence that state or district wide testing was considered.

Ed. 1111.01 1 file: did not indicate whether extended year program was considered.  
CFR 300.309(a)

Ed. 1115.06 3 files: lacked evidence that LRE was determined.  
CFR 300.552

Ed. 1109.03 1 file: lacked evidence that regular ed. teacher was in attendance at evaluation  
CFR 300.342(a)2 and determination meetings.

Ed. 1109.03 1 file: lacked evidence that LEA rep. present for eval. & determination meeting  
CFR 300.344(d)(4)

Ed. 1109.03 1 file: lacked evidence of representatives from other agencies.  
CFR 300.344

Ed. 1107.07 (c )(3) 1 file: lacked evidence that LEA representative present at evaluation/eligibility meeting  
missing in one out of three files.

Ed. 1107.07 (c ) 2 files: lacked evidence that parent was given copy of evaluation report  
CFR 300.534(a)(2)

Ed. 1109.01(b) 1 file: Measurable goals were missing from IEP.  
CFR 300.347(2)



<b>Gilford High School, (Continued)</b>
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Ed. 1109.01(1)            3 files: transition statements were missing.  
CFR 300.29

Ed. 1109.03(c)(d)        3 files: lacked evidence of steps to insure that students interests were taken into account  
CFR 300.344(b)(2,3)    or that other agencies may participate in the planning.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Share the new forms with other districts.
- Keep up the good work!
- The school may want to consider re-organization of their filing system.

## Out-of-District Files

**# OF FILES REVIEWED:** 2 Files (There are only 2 out-of-district students)

**CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

<u>Ed. 1107.06</u>	1 file: the three year re-evaluation was 5 months overdue.
<u>Ed. 1107.01ff</u> <u>CFR 300.505ff</u>	2 files: missing important evaluation data, the consent to evaluate, no variety of assessments and lacked evidence of certified teacher of suspected disability.
<u>Ed. 1107.07</u> <u>CFR 300.345</u>	1 file: lacked evidence that determination of eligibility team was multidisciplinary or that parent was involved.
<u>Ed. 1109.04</u> <u>CFR 300.345</u>	1 file: lacked evidence of 10 day notice of IEP meeting No evidence of procedural 2 files no evidence of procedural safeguards given to parents and no evidence of involvement of student over 16 and no evidence of transition statement in both files.
<u>Ed. 1109.01(l)</u> <u>CFR 300.347</u>	1 file: lacked evidence of person from outside agency involved for student over 16. No transition statement found in file.
<u>CFR 300.347(a)(4)</u>	1 file: lacked explanations of the extent to which the student will participate with non-disabled children.
<u>Ed. 1109.01(n)</u>	1 file: IEP laced signature of for student who is over 18.
<u>Ed. 1115.06</u> <u>CFR 300.552</u>	2 files: lacked evidence of determination of LRE.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

# **ADDENDUM**

## **JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM**

### **SAU 79**

#### **Student File Review**

#### **Case Study Document**

#### **Reimbursement Claim Form**

#### **Case Study Addendum Form**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ADDENDUM</b> <b>JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</b></p>
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**NUMBER OF FILES REVIEWED: 0**

There are currently no James O. students in the Gilmanton School District.